

## STUDENT EVALUATIVE FEEDBACK – Selected unedited comments

### A. As an instructor:

#### History of Philosophy – Medieval/Early Modern, Winter 2008:

"Great teacher! Enjoyed the class very much even though my major has nothing to do with philosophy"

"Professor was extremely good. Excellent over-all and very effective and engaging"

"Very good job in both preparation and organization of class materials. The chronology of the coursework helped in understanding progress and advancements in philosophy. Good choices of philosophers. Keep up the good work Vasilis"

"Great class!"

"Some lectures are a little dry with a lot of content & ideas. Today was one of the best. The professor seemed to have great energy that kept the class awake with a few laughs"

"Very good professor with entertaining lectures"

"I enjoyed listening to professor Tsompanidis' lectures because they had a lot of content & information & he made them interesting & fun as well"

"The course was pretty interesting and the notes are very organized. Both TA & professor explained concepts well. I enjoyed the humor in some of the lectures/notes"

### B. As a teaching assistant:

Written comments by students in U.C.S.B. take the form of answering the following questions:

- a) Are there any things which stand out as importantly noteworthy about your TA?
- b) Did your TA (positively/negatively) affect your appreciation/understanding of Philosophy?

#### 1. Philosophy of Mind (upper-level course), Spring 2008:

- a) "Best TA I've ever had. His help with papers way invaluable and he was so thorough. He's perfect!"

"He is the most helpful TA I have ever had, and he makes everything more interesting"

"The explanations in schematic ways, putting arguments in simple, understandable schemes was especially outstanding! (the real excellence lies in making the difficult things appear simple)"

"He's clever and gives good examples"

"Very open to help and clarify through various methods (email, office hours)"

"I had him for Philosophy 1. He is why I chose to take more Phil classes."

"He was extremely helpful in giving feedback on written work"

- b) "I've had him twice now as a TA and he is excellent! I purposely pick sections according to if he is teaching them"

"He makes it good times!"

"Positively affected both my appreciation & understanding for philosophy – Thank you!"

"Very helpful in understanding the concepts in the course"

#### 2. Philosophy of Mind (upper-level course), Spring 2007:

- a) "Personable and very approachable. Can balance higher level discussion with basic conceptual groundwork helping students of all levels and interests"

"The objectiveness of paper-grading! (i.e. with score sheets)"

"He's a nice guy and leads a good discussion session because it's really interactive"

"Vasilis is eager & willing to discuss class materials as well as outside material. He is willing to meet with you outside of designated office hours; it is apparent that he genuinely cares about the topics he is teaching and his students' understanding of them"

"Good sense of humor. Enjoys material, answers difficult conceptual questions directly and well"

"Very open-minded. Moderated discussions well. Very simple explanations"

- b) "Positively. He values intuition and thought, and stresses that there is not necessarily a right answer. He wants to see you think about a problem constructively which is very helpful and encouraging"  
 "Positively. I really enjoyed the class and thought he did a very good job of helping me understand everything fully"  
 "Positively. I hate philosophy of mind and he made me hate it slightly less"  
 "He explained the material clearly. He's kind of like a friend helping you out. Most discussion sessions usually suck because they lecture at you and everyone is shy; but not this quarter"

### 3. Introduction to Philosophy, Winter 2007:

- a) "He is very enthusiastic & makes the subject relative to our lives. Makes it clear that philosophy isn't a boring history lesson. It's instead all around us"  
 "Ability to tell us about the material in a way that we can relate to it"  
 "He explained everything very clearly. He was also very easy to talk to, especially around the time papers were due"  
 "I like his attitude, the way he leads discussion, and his great use of examples to help us understand the materials"  
 "Great job, good sense of humor"  
 "-enthusiastic about subject    -good examples                      -fair grader                      -Handouts = great!"
- b) "Very positive influence. I left section every time very happy & satisfied that I signed up for this course. Makes me want to take more philosophy courses in the future"  
 "Positively. I thought philosophy was going to be very boring, but he made it interesting & easy to understand"

### 4. Ethics, Fall 2006:

- a) "He was always cheerful (even when sick) and made the section upbeat, as well as informative"  
 "Fair grading, doesn't let you off easy"  
 "He's great. I wish my other TAs were like him. He's very approachable and friendly"  
 "He was very easy to approach and talk to"  
 "He's great at logic"  
 "He made us want to participate and did not scare us into not coming to section if we missed a reading. He is very receptive to questions"  
 "Very charismatic and helpful – made it a fun course"  
 "He is the Michael Jordan of TAs"
- b) "I liked his enthusiasm and it helped me want to go to sections and lectures"  
 "Positively. I really enjoyed this class and section"  
 "He helped me understand it by his breakdown of everything: lectures, reading, etc."

### 5. History of Philosophy – Modern, Spring 2006:

- a) "His understanding and willingness to teach the material. Often times he makes complicated class material into easily understood and comprehended concepts. He is a very effective teacher and very easy to approach"  
 "He's cool and easy to talk to"  
 "Laid back, smart, helpful, cheery. Undeterred by students' apathy!"  
 "He always made extra time to help us if we wanted it. He gives a lot of examples which helped with my understanding of this course. Funny and approachable"
- b) "He inspires those around him to become more philosophically inclined"  
 "I will definitely continue to take philosophy because of the outstanding treatment I received"

"Positive. Always willing to help, knows his stuff well & can teach it"

"Positively. It's bad, but interesting!"

"Positively. I would only take another philosophy class because of him"

**6. History of Philosophy – Medieval/Early Modern, Summer 2006:**

a) "Very personable, easy to talk to. I like how he geared the discussions to the main topics – he always asked us questions"

"He knew the material very well and answers all questions"

"The TA was very approachable from a student point of view"

b) "He helped me a lot by helping grasp the ideas that I wouldn't understand in the lectures"

"I appreciate philosophy better due to his explanation of arguments but I still think some arguments are absurd..."

**7. History of Philosophy – Medieval/Early Modern, Winter 2006:**

a) "When I was struggling, he encouraged me to come by for help, even when I was ready to give up. He also made great study guides"

"He was really good about making it simple & easily understood"

"Clear points, good discussion leader, uses whiteboard"

"He is wise"

"He is careful of what he speaks of in lecture. Very careful on what he says in compliance to the material. Helpful and prepares handouts"

b) "Yes he made me more interested. Usually, I am not a big fan of Phil"

"Yes - enthusiasm – talks about outside research"

"Positively, he made philosophy more enjoyable"

**8. Introduction to Philosophy, Fall 2005:**

a) "Tries very hard to make material clear & easy to understand"

"Very enthusiastic, educated, made things simple & clear"

"He's very laid-back, which definitely encourages discussion that's not as tight and formal as some sections"

"He is very willing to let students dictate the nature of the discussion. Instead of forcing topics upon us, he focuses on what we are confused about"

"Very cool, laid-back, and relaxed, but very helpful. Great combo"

"Insightful in helping prepare for writing the essays. Funny and helped end boredom"

"Yes, he was very patient & willing to repeat written & verbal material until we understood it"

b) "He did a great job helping me understand a subject so hateful like philosophy"

"My TA positively affected my appreciation of Phil by explaining more about it thoroughly"

"Most definitely a positive effect was achieved. My TA was passionate about the topics & understanding of our frustration, and helpful in our struggle to comprehend material"

"Yes. I actually hate philosophy, but he made me hate it much, much less. I almost began to like it"